

A Provisional Government was established, of which M. de Talleyrand was appointed President. The other members were General Beurnonville, Comte Francois de Jaucourt, the Due Dalberg, who had married one of Maria Louisa's ladies of honor, and the Abbe de Montesquieu. The place of Chancellor of the Legion of Honor was given to the Abbe de Pradt. Thus there were two abbés among the members of the Provisional Government, and by a singular chance they happened to be the same who had officiated at the mass which was performed in the Champ de Mars on the day of the first federation.

Those who were dissatisfied with the events of the 31st of March now saw no hope but in the possibility that the Emperor of Austria would separate from his Allies, or at least not make common cause with them in favor of the re-establishment of the Bourbons. But that monarch had been brought up in the old policy of his family, and was imbued with the traditional principles of his Cabinet. I know for a fact that the sentiments and intentions of the Emperor of Austria perfectly coincided with those of his Allies. Anxious to ascertain the truth on this subject, I ventured, when in conversation with the Emperor Alexander, to hint at the reports I had heard relative to the cause of the Emperor of Austria's absence. I do not recollect the precise words of his Majesty's answer, but it enabled me to infer with certainty that Francis II. was in no way averse to the overthrow of his son-in-law, and that his absence from the scene of the discussions was only occasioned by a feeling of delicacy natural enough in his situation.¹

¹ "Let France declare itself," said Metternich to De Vitrolles about the 12th of March, 1814, at Troyes, "and we are ready to support it: no consideration shall stop us. Do you believe that we consider ourselves as tied by the interests of our Archduchess or by those of her son? Nothing of the sort: the safety of States is not sacrificed to family sentiments, and even the perspective of a Regency which should give power to the Empress and her son will not turn us from following the conditions necessary for the existence of the States of Europe" (*Vitrolles*, p. 100). This agrees with Metternich's answer to Napoleon on the 26th of June, 1813. "The Emperor Francis will then dethrone his daughter?" asked Napoleon. "The Emperor Francis knows nothing but his duty, and he will fulfil it. Whatever the fate of his daughter." * . . . « , . . . » . . . ^ _ ^ ~ ~ 1.

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